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DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING

100 MARKIN STREET · SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94102

July 14, 1978

PROPOSED FINAL REVISIONS TO THE POTRERO HILL
NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT PLAN -

Draft for Citizen Review - December 1977

P. 3, add after first paragraph - an update to community involvement.

The draft was distributed to neighborhood organizations and all individuals who have attended any one of the meetings held for the preparation of the Neighborhood Improvement Plan. Five community meetings were held by the Department to obtain community feedback on the draft. The Plan and notice of meetings were publicized in the Potrero View newspaper as well as by flyers. Additional residents attended the meetings and offered their comments.

P. 9, Section 3 on "Precale Inspection" is deleted.

P. 13, Section 7, "Wisconsin Site Development".

Much discussion has been focussed on the development of the Wisconsin Street Site. Residents who are concerned with the needs for housing and for open space have been asked to revise some of the guidelines. Significant changes have been made to provide additional open space compatible and attractive housing. The following guidelines as revised are as follows:

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land use of the site should be devoted to residential housing and public open space.

Land north of the Wisconsin Street Site north of the 25th parallel to and 100 feet north of the 25th street-of-way should be devoted to publicly accessible open space, to be called Starr King Park.

Commercial facilities should not be included within the site. Instead, commercial activities serving the community development should be located in the commercial district at 23rd and Wisconsin Streets and at other locations in order to reinforce existing facilities.

(4) No public or community facilities should be built on the open space site.

(5) Major site improvements, particularly the removal of concrete foundations, should be undertaken expeditiously at the Starr King Park to restore it to its natural setting.

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P. 9, Section 3 on "Presale Inspection" is deleted.

P. 13, Section 7, "Wisconsin Site Development".

Much discussion has been focussed on the development guidelines for the Wisconsin Street Site. Residents who are concern with the needs for housing and for open space have met to discuss and to revise some of the guidelines. Significant changes have been made to provide additional open space and to encourage compatible and attractive housing. The entire set of guidelines as revised is as follows:

Land Use:

- (1) The principal land use of the site should be devoted to private family housing and public open space.
- (2) The portion of the Wisconsin Street Site north of the line running parallel to and 100 feet north of the 25th Street right-of-way should be devoted to publicly accessible open space, to be called Starr King Park.
- (3) Commercial facilities should not be included within the Wisconsin site. Instead, commercial activities serving the proposed development should be located in the commercial areas at 23rd and Wisconsin Streets and at 20th Street in order to reinforce existing facilities there.
- (4) No public or community facilities should be built on the open space site.
- (5) Major site improvements, particularly the removal of concrete foundations, should be undertaken expeditiously at the Starr King Park to restore it to its natural setting.

Housing

- (6) All housing should be privately-developed and privately-owned. To the greatest extent possible, housing should be developed for individual or cooperative ownership. Because of the concentration of public housing in the area no additional public housing should be built.
- (7) All housing should be economically integrated. Any housing developed should be for households whose incomes reflect income mix on Potrero Hill as shown in the 1970 census.
- (8) The housing units should be primarily family oriented, providing for a range of family sizes.
- (9) Overall housing density should be within the standards of RH-2 (two units per 2,500 square feet of lot area). Cluster housing and communal parking garage should be explored through "planned unit development."
- (10) To the greatest extent economically practical, housing should incorporate energy conserving systems and construction techniques.

Open Space

- (11) Starr King Park should be maintained in a predominantly natural setting. The area west of the Starr King School may include a sitting area and a small tot lot, provided that maintenance is assured. Pedestrian access should be provided from De Haro, Carolina and Coral Streets.
- (12) A minimum of 45% of the developable lot area (south of Starr King Park) should be usable open space. This standard corresponds with the open space requirement for the proposed RH-2 residential zoning district.
- (13) Private open space, courtyards, decks, or balconies should be provided for each family unit.
- (14) Common open space should be landscaped and provided with benches, shelters and other amenity items.

Urban Design

- (15) To the extent architecturally and economically feasible, the Site should be developed as a "planned unit development" which would provide flexibility in the siting of buildings and open space. City Planning Commission review and public hearings would be required through the conditional use procedure.

- (16) Development should relate to the scale and character of the surrounding private housing. House-like buildings (not apartments) should be encouraged and integrated with existing private housing patterns.
- (17) Facade treatment and setbacks should be varied and interesting, to eliminate any "project" image. Facade materials should harmonize with existing private housing in the area.
- (18) Large visible retaining walls should be avoided; however if necessary, they should be landscaped and/or articulated to reduce appearance of massiveness.
- (19) Buildings should be sited to allow for maximum view from the top of the site. Blockage of view from nearby residential buildings should be restricted.
- (20) Development on the site above the plane of vision established by this viewpoint should be restricted. Penetration of this plane should be allowed only when structure does not detract from the major viewpoints.
- (21) Building mass on the slope should blend in with and should follow the slope of the site. Cut and fill operation should be kept to a minimum.
- (22) At least one street tree per building should be planted in the sidewalk areas. Landscaping should be provided in setback areas.

Circulation

- (23) 26th Street should serve as the major circulation street for this part of the neighborhood. Traffic flow should be discouraged along De Haro Street. Carolina Street south of Coral Road (adjacent to Starr King School) should be closed to through traffic.
- (24) The intersection of 23rd and Carolina Streets should be modified as necessary to increase safety without encouraging additional traffic.
- (25) Pedestrian traffic should be facilitated across both park and residential areas of the site.
- (26) Adequate off-street parking should be provided for visitors and residents. Curb cuts should be kept to a minimum to provide sufficient on-street parking.
- (27) To the greatest extent permitted by the terrain, the site should be accessible by persons in wheelchairs.

Other Provisions

- (28) No existing privately-owned building on or adjacent to the Site should be demolished by public action as part of the development.
- (29) Priority for jobs resulting from the housing and related development should be given to Hill's residents.
- (30) No significant deviations from the proposed guidelines should be permitted without consensus approval from the community.

It is expected that local residents who are interested in pursuing the housing development and those who are concerned with the environment will continue to work to refine the guidelines. Detailed site planning, environmental assessment, and economic feasibility studies are needed to determine what can reasonably be developed that is both sensitive to the neighborhood environment and affordable to the maximum number of local residents. Information deriving from the studies is essential in making an accurate and objective evaluation on the desirable number, types, and location of the housing units. By pursuing the project at the neighborhood level, the community would be able to guide and control the development so that housing speculation and adverse impacts are averted.

Endorsement of the guidelines does not constitute public approval of any future development plan. The City Planning Commission must approve any development plan through a conditional use process. A detailed environmental assessment of the proposed plan will be prepared to provide an accurate description of the project's impact. Public hearings and neighborhood meetings will be held to ensure adequate community input prior to any decision.

P. 18, Section A1., the first paragraph pertaining to the Potrero Hill Recreation Center is updated:

During the last three years, almost \$200,000 of Community Development and Open Space funds have been allocated to renovate the building and playground. The Children's play area located at the northwest corner of the Center is scheduled for renovation. Additional improvements needed include more sport equipment (with emphasis on serving the needs of women), a more identifiable dog-running area (fenced with appropriate direction signs) and an exercise/jogging course. The exercise/jogging course similar to the one in Marina Green can be installed within and around the Potrero Hill Recreation Center.

P. 18, Section A2., the second paragraph pertaining to Jackson Park is updated:

In addition, \$200,000 has been allocated from the 1975 and 1976 Community Development Programs to replace the deteriorated building with a modern facility suitable for housing recreation activities for disabled people as well as the entire community. After several community meetings, the project has been revised from redevelopment to renovation of the existing building.

P. 19, Section 3, recommendations for McKinley Square are revised as follows: (Recommendation for a basketball court is deleted.

Relatively little recreation equipment has been provided on this site. A community garden has been developed on the north part of the site. Some children play equipment has been installed along the slope and at the northwest corner of the grass area.

Two rows of windbreaks located on the north and west side of the Square should be planted to provide protection and comfort to park users. Additional sitting areas located to maximize the beautiful panoramic views should be installed for the enjoyment of visitors. A low fence with transparent metal fabric should be installed around the children sand area to keep out animals.

The most serious problem that prevents the full enjoyment of the park users is dog littering. Greater surveillance and enforcement of dog leash and littering laws are needed. Dog owners should be encouraged to take their dogs to the designated dog-running area located on the lower, western slope of the park.

P. 19, Section 4, recommendations for community gardens are revised:

Community gardens provide an unique way for many residents to enjoy open space. Whenever community gardeners (CETA or volunteers) are available, new vegetable gardens and landscaping may be installed on most vacant land. The farm as part of its program, can provide assistance and resource for initiating new community gardens on the Hill. Some of the potential community gardens sites are:

- (a) Arkansas and 18th Streets (abandoned railroad land)
- (b) The Wisconsin Street site (adjacent to Starr King School)
- (c) 22nd Street between Arkansas and Connecticut
- (d) Vacant land along Missouri Street between 20th and 22nd Streets

- (e) Potrero Terrace Nursery
- (f) The Waterfront Areas
- (g) Public Housing yards
- (h) Crossroad Community - the Farm

P. 20, Section 6 (iii) is revised to include the Pickle Family Circus and to delete the Artist In Response facility.

(iii) Olivet Church (Pickle Family Circus) - Another private neighborhood facility is the former Olivet Church located at Missouri and 19th Street. The facility is owned by the Neighborhood House and currently houses the Pickle Family Circus, the facility is currently under-utilized and has good potential for providing additional social service programs. Major renovation to the structure is needed if the facility is developed into a multi-purpose neighborhood center.

P. 21, add two additional recommendations to Section B "Provide New Community and Recreation Facilities."

9. Starr King Park: the area immediately west of Starr King School has been identified in the Wisconsin Street Site guidelines as an open space site. This hilltop site offers panoramic views that should be protected. The relatively flat area on the top should be developed into a park. Normal through-traffic and parking along Carolina Street should be discouraged or eliminated.

P. 21, 10 Public Indoor Swimming Pool.

One of the major outstanding recreation needs is a public swimming pool serving the Hill. Should the population of the Hill justify a pool, some of the locations that should be considered include the Potrero Hill Recreation Center and the vacant triangular lot east of the Potrero Hill Junior High School. If the pool is built, it should incorporate a solar heating system.

P. 26, Sections 3 (i) and 3 (iii) relating to school yard improvements are revised:

(i) Patrick Henry - the future use of the school is uncertain in view of the Unified School District's "redesign plan". The existing school yard nevertheless is an important recreation resource in this part of the neighborhood. Whatever the future use of the school may be, the school yard should be accessible to the residents for recreational use. A playstructure/sand area can be built at the southern end of the yard on one of the upper terraces. In the event that the school yard is not needed in conjunction with the future use of the school building, tennis courts can be developed within part of the yard.

(iii) Starr King - a playstructure/sand area should be built on the north or east side of the school yard. Approximately 30 sturdy, windresistent trees should be planted along the three street frontages. If there is continuing support for the community garden activity, new vegetable soil beds could be installed on the vacant land south of the school.

P. 27, Section 5, regarding Street Assessment Districts is revised:

Certain unpaved or inaccessible streets in Potrero Hill have never been improved to City standards and therefore (according to City Charter) are not accepted for public maintenace. If there is support from property owners for improving a particular street, the Public Work Code provides a street assessment procedure by which owners contribute to the initial construction of the street (meeting City Engineering standards). The first legal step in street assessment districts is a petition from owners of a majority of the street frontage. The districts are subject to approvals by the Director of Public Works and the Board of Supervisors after public hearings.

Street assessment districts however do not offer a realistic solution since they often create a heavy financial burden upon adjacent property owners. Modest and less costly street improvements (not necessarily up to City Engineering standards) and alternative funding source should be explored. Where streets are impassable, pedestrian stairways could be built to provide safe public access. Minimum grading and paving works that meet the needs of adjacent property owners should be considered for all unimproved streets.

P. 28, Section 8, regarding Joint City and Community Clean-up Campaign.

Joint projects by community groups, City Departments, and the San Francisco for a Cleaner City organization may include:

- sponsoring dumpster days;
- organizing clean-up projects on parks, vacant lots, littered street, and public housing grounds;
- educating school children on litter problems and sponsoring the student project "clean-street fighter".

P. 29, the first paragraph in the chapter on Community Safety is revised as followed:

San Francisco lies between two major earthquake faults - San Andreas Fault off the Ocean to the west and the Hayward Fault in the East Bay. Although much of Potrero Hill is in a "weak" intensity zone, there is a possibility of structural failures, land slides, and utility breakage which could present great hazards and problems to life safety. It is therefore important to minimize hazards to life safety through preventive measures.

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P. 32, Under Section B, add a new section to describe the Central Waterfront Demonstration Project.

2. Central Waterfront Demonstration Project

A Central Waterfront Demonstration Project has been initiated by the Mayor's Office to concentrate improvement effort in the Central Waterfront area. The Project focuses on the industrial and maritime areas from the China Basin Channel to the Islais Creek Channel and from Freeway 280 to the Bay. Work activities for the Project will include preparation of industrial District Improvement Plans; formulation by the Port of a Maritime Facilities Plan for Port properties; identification of needed transportation improvements; assessment of the market to determine the most beneficial investment program; and analysis of opportunities for better utilization of properties. An interagency Task Force composed of staffs from the Mayor's Office, Port of San Francisco, Department of City Planning, and Redevelopment Agency will undertake the work activities.

Some of the specific problems that will be addressed by the Demonstration Project are (a) declining industrial base and high unemployment; (b) physical deterioration and neglect; (c) underutilization of Port and rail properties, and (d) access to and within the area. The project will propose strategies and specific actions for:

- improving the area's attractiveness to existing and new industry;
- satisfying the facility requirements of Port's maritime activities;
- undertaking mixed-use and other developments;
- implementing marketing, financing, and development capability for quick-starting projects;
- increasing the tax base;
- increasing local employment opportunities;
- coordinating planning and implementing activities;
- stimulating citizen participation in planning, review, and implementation of work activities.

P. 41, the last sentence of second paragraph regarding the installation of benches on 23rd and Wisconsin Streets is revised as followed:

Better lighting should be provided for this intersection.

P. 45, add to the end of second paragraph under Section 1. "Expansion of Muni Services.":

If the overall level of Muni services is increased, the #19 Polk line that terminates at Eighth and Mission Streets may be extended to serve Potrero Hill.

P. 46, Section (iii) regarding the #19 Polk.

The POM's recommendation for the #19 Polk has generated much concern and controversy in the neighborhood. The #19 Polk is currently the major north-south line that links Potrero Hill to the northeast sector of the City. The line is well used and makes important connections with many major east-west lines along Polk Street. The #19 Polk should continue to provide at least the same level of service along its existing route.

Potrero Hill residents have persistantly advocated for more frequent services on the #19 Polk. The elimination of the SP Depot trips would significantly increase the number of #19 Polk trips to Potrero Hill. The POM recommendation for the #42 Sansome shows a circumferential route running along Van Ness Avenue and serving the SP Depot. If this recommendation is implemented, the existing SP Depot trips for the #19 Polk would not be as necessary and can be re routed to Potrero Hill instead. This change would provide additional motor coaches for reducing the headways on the Potrero Hill trips.

Additional Potrero Hill residents would be able to benefit from the #19 Polk service if its southern terminal is extended beyond 23rd Street to serve the southern part of community. One possible routing is to have the southbound #19 Polk run to 26th Street, east to Connecticut, north to 25th Street, west to Kansas, and north to the present terminal at 23rd and Kansas Streets. The extension could easily be absorbed by the additional bus runs and still provide a greater level of service north of 23rd Street. Another possible extension is to have the line run to 26th Street, east to Wisconsin, north to 23rd, east to Dakota, south to 25th, and east to Third Street. The route extension to this part of the community would allow the rerouting of the #35 Eureka to 20th Street where it could better serve the neighborhood.

The recommendation for the #19 Polk is as follows:

(iii) #19 Polk

The #19 Polk can provide better services to Potrero Hill if all of the SP Depot trips are rerouted to Potrero Hill and the existing line is extended to serve more Potrero Hill residents. The abandonment of the SP Depot trips is contingent upon a replacement service line such as the POM proposal for the #42 Sansome. The extension of the #19 Polk beyond its present terminal at 23rd Street should adequately serve the residents in the southern part of the Hill. This would permit the rerouting of the 24th Street (former #35 Eureka) crosstown line to run along 20th Street in Potrero Hill. No specific extension route is being recommended in this Plan since it is still being analyzed by Muni. Any route extension is contingent upon having sufficient buses to reduce the existing headway time on the Potrero Hill trips so that all residents will receive more services.

P. 46 Section (iv) is clarified as follows:

No current changes are being proposed in this Plan for the #53 Southern Heights, the #47 Potrero, and the #15 Third. However, Municipal Railway may have some longer range plans for adjusting these and other lines. Any proposal for route changes affecting the Potrero Hill neighborhood should be publicized and discussed with the residents.

P. 47, Section 4, regarding Industrial Traffic Circulation Plan is updated as follow:

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An overall industrial traffic circulation plan should be prepared in conjunction with the on-going study of the Central Waterfront Area (See Economic Development Chapter). This effort would involve data collection, identification and analysis of problem areas, overall strategies for improvements, and developing transportation implementation component for each of the Industrial District Improvement Plans (for individual subareas).

Any plans to improve traffic circulation should minimize the intrusion of truck and non-local traffic into the residential areas. The plans should consider transportation elements such as pedestrian circulation and safety, parking facilities and controls, movement through neighborhood entrances, new transit services at employment - concentrated areas, and incentives for transit and carpool riders.

P. 47, add new section regarding Street modification.

6. Street modification

There are several streets in Potrero Hill that have been identified as hazardous. There streets include Kansas between 18th and Mariposa Streets (where the streets are misaligned); Carolina between Coral and 23rd Streets; 26th Street near Freeway 101 and Army Street; and the intersection of Division, Eight, and Twonsend, and Kansas. These Streets should be analyzed by the Department of Public and needed changes should be made.

